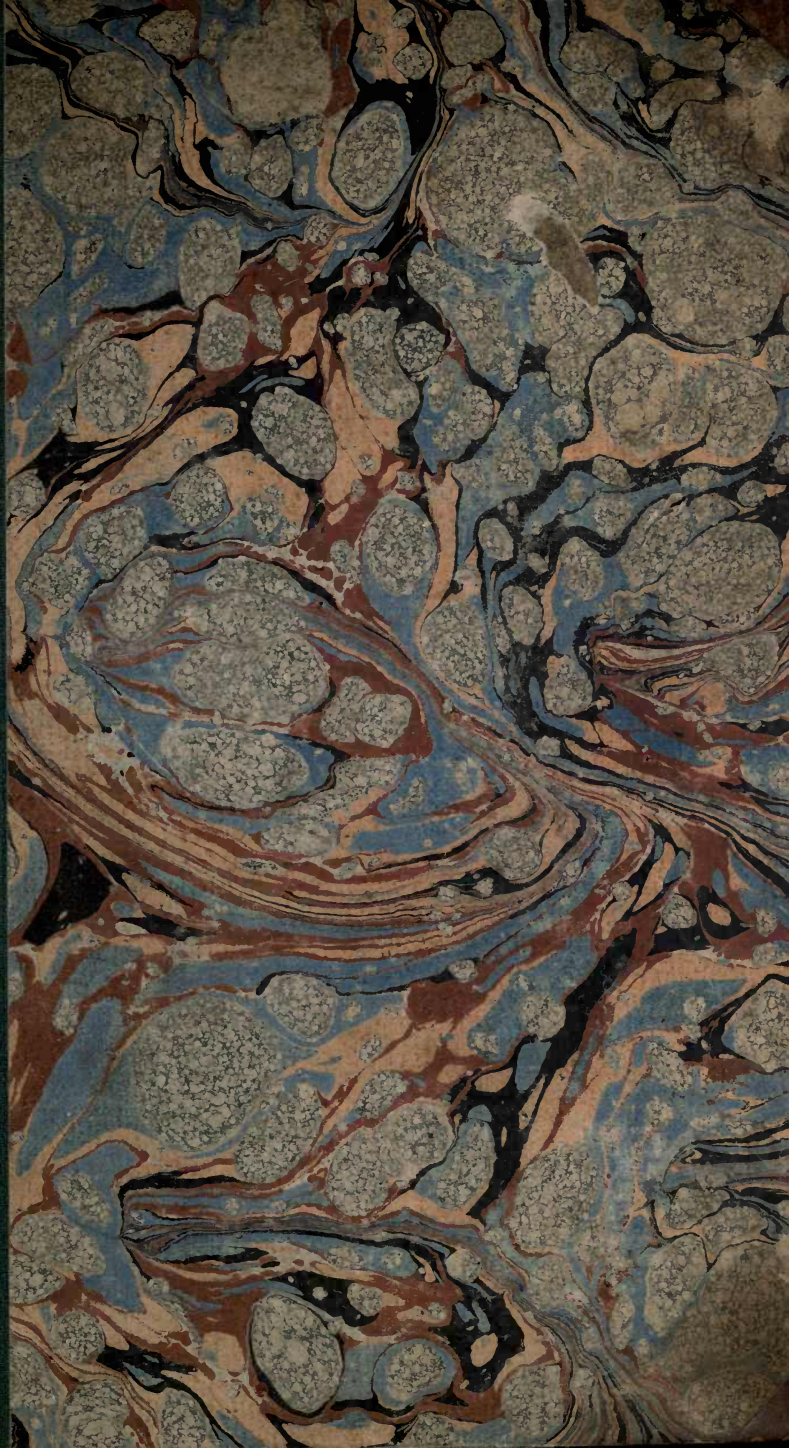


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a translation of John  
Bunyan's *Sacred pathetical exercises*  
by Dawson Warrall

15/-

1st ed.

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London. Published by W.H. Pyne Jan<sup>y</sup> 1800.

*THE*  
PARISH PRIEST.



"Multa dies variusque labor mutabilis Ævi  
"Rettulit in PEJUS."

VIRGIL.





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THE

# PARISH PRIEST:

A POEM.

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LONDON:

PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM,  
*Dean Street, Fetter Lane:*

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1800.

THE

# PARISH PRIEST:

A POEM.

Entered at Stationers Hall.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY W. WHITTAKER,

TRINITY STREET,

ST. MARTIN'S LANE, NEAR CHURCH LANE.

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AND BY J. & J. G. SMITH, ST. MARTIN'S LANE, NEAR CHURCH LANE.

1800.



*TO SIR JAMES WINTER LAKE, BART.*

I RESPECTFULLY DEDICATE THIS TRANSLATION.

*DAWSON WARREN.*

EDMONTON,  
*Jan.* 1800.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

*THIS Work is a Translation, with several Alterations, of a Latin Poem, entitled SACERDOS PARÆCIALIS RUSTICUS, written by the Reverend John Burton, Vicar of Mapledersham, and printed at Oxford in 1757.*

*The Vignette is a View of Edmonton Church in its ancient state, before the Walls were covered with Brick, and the Gothic Stone Window-frames changed for Wood.*

*The Frontispiece refers to the 173d and following Lines.*





## ARGUMENT.

As Socrates suffered by the buffoonery of Comedians, so is the Parish Priest too often an object of Ridicule.—The vindication of that character therefore undertaken.—Address to Oxford.—The Priest's appearance in the Theatre at the Commemoration.—His visit to his own College.—Invocation to the Muse to sing the Services of the Church, and the Labours of the Priest.—Comforts and advantages of a Country Life; examples, Gilpin, Hooker, Herbert, Hales.

Institution of the Sabbath.—A Country Congregation.—The Priest how distinguished and respected.—He begins the Liturgy.—Exhortation.—Confession.—Absolution.—Lord's Prayer.—Gloria Patri.—Character of David.—104th Psalm.—First Lesson.—Character of Isaiah.—Advice on Reading.—Te Deum.—Second Lesson.—Contrast between the modes of promulgating the Law and the Gospel.—Farther Cautions on Reading.—Jubilate.—Creed.—Address to Faith.—Prayers.—Psalm-singing.—Sermon, and its various subjects.—Sacrament.—Baptism.—Catechising.—Confirmation.—Matrimony.—Thanksgiving.—Visitation of the Sick.—Funeral.—Old age and gradual decay of the Priest.—His serene Death.—And glorious prospects of future Happiness.





THE

## PARISH PRIEST.

---

THE poisonous jestings of an impious stage  
Defam'd and ruin'd the Athenian sage,  
Who by a death to culprits only due,  
Fell through the clamours of a thoughtless crew ;  
While nought avail'd his piety sublime  
Which soar'd above the errors of his time,  
His wisdom great as if inspir'd by heav'n,  
Nor yet the witness from Apollo giv'n.

Thou bearest too, O venerable Priest !  
As Socrates has borne, the scoffing jest ;

10

Thee, though belov'd of God, of virtue tried,  
 With sacrilegious wit buffoons deride ;  
 Thy decent dress, thy looks devoid of guile,  
 And saintlike manners move their scornful smile.

Shall no one then assert thy injur'd fame,  
 And give due honour to thy valued name ?

O Oxford ! from whose fost'ring care we trace  
 The ripening virtues of the rising race,  
 Whose pious labours rear our gen'rous youth  
 In the bright paths of science and of truth, 20  
 Accept my verse, once more my efforts view  
 Nor scorn a subject which depends on you ;  
 It is from you our blest religion draws  
 A vast support to aid her glorious cause ;  
 The pupil train'd by you, in riper years  
 Her friend, her guardian, and her boast appears ;  
 While then his actions with your rules agree,  
 To praise the Parish Priest is praising thee.

Oft as the muse her festive triumph holds,  
 And in her courts her favour'd sons beholds, 30  
 To view the solemn rites and splendid scene,  
 With looks benign and venerable mien

The Priest attends, he sees with glowing eyes,  
 These long-remember'd high solemnities;  
 His studious labours he recalls to mind,  
 When Oxford's walls his youthful steps confin'd;  
 Now with glad heart he hears the muses sing,  
 And the full theatre with plaudits ring.

Long hence remov'd the good and aged Priest,  
 In these our attic walls a welcome guest, 40  
 With fresh delight each well-known scene surveys,  
 Meets his old friends, and talks of former days;  
 And now with wonder views each alter'd place,  
 Chang'd like the customs of the present race;  
 At every turn some novelties surprise,  
 Some new improvements meet his wondering eyes,  
 Yet still he thinks (the thought his bosom swells)  
 "How blest is he who here sequester'd dwells;"  
 And when those walls he views which towering stand,  
 Rais'd by his ancient patron's pious hand, 50  
 (A pond'rous monument of gothic art)  
 A sudden rapture shoots across his heart;  
 "O thou," he cries "above each college dear,  
 'Beneath whose roof I saw the circling year  
 "Seven times compleat it's course—I fain had staid,  
 "And longer dwelt beneath thy classic shade."



The portals enter'd, soon each object claims  
 More due regard ; their long-neglected names  
 Rush on his mind—but should kind fate ordain  
 His former chambers to his use again ; 60  
 Rejoic'd he asks his friends—good stories old  
 Of past transactions with delight are told ;  
 By turns he talks of those now gone or dead,  
 Of Fellows, Tutors, Bursar, or the Head ;  
 On youthful scenes with conscious pleasure dwells,  
 And, Nestor-like, his own adventures tells.  
 Whilst, happy man ! so fresh the dream appears,  
 He quite forgets the lapse of half his years.

Thus let him come, and thus, a welcome friend,  
 Let him our solemn festivals attend ; 70  
 No praise unmeaning from his lips we hear,  
 But plaudits springing from a heart sincere ;  
 Pleas'd with those scenes his honest bosom loves,  
 His language paints them as his sense approves.  
 Then, Oxford, value and respect his name,  
 And place it high upon the lists of fame ;  
 If to religion any praise be giv'n,  
 If honour yet attends th' approv'd of heav'n,  
 Bestow it here, on him thy favour shed,  
 And bind unfading laurels on his head. 80

And thee, my Muse, the sacred theme must please,  
 Tho' long unus'd to sing such strains as these ;  
 May sober truth thy wand'ring flights controul,  
 And stamp the solemn subject on my soul,  
 As I attempt in simple lines to trace  
 The village teacher's unaffected grace,  
 Describe his office, and instructive cares,  
 And paint him at his duties and his pray'rs.  
 The subject well deserves the polish'd lays  
 Of loftier poets, and had claim'd the praise 90  
 Of Chaucer's self, (although the foe avow'd  
 Of hermits, monks, and all the canting crowd)  
 Whose flaming satire superstition's night  
 Dispell'd, and brought hypocrisy to light.  
 No worthier theme can e'er our thoughts engage,  
 No name more sacred dignify the page :  
 If superstition could, in days of yore,  
 Exhaust the riches of the muse's store,  
 In praise of fabled gods, and impious men,  
 Should not religion now direct the pen ? 100  
 O, then, defend with zeal her honor'd cause,  
 And give the name of Priest its due applause.

How happy he, who through the vale of life,  
 Far from ambition, far from fear and strife,

Walks safely on—in rural pleasures blest,  
 Joys which delight the wisest and the best  
 He dwells retir'd, nor views with anxious eyes  
 Those perishable toys the worldly prize :  
 To all that's useful, good and great inclin'd,  
 Eternal life still occupies his mind. 110  
 Yet while to loftiest hopes his thoughts ascend,  
 See him his duty carefully attend ;  
 Earnest his sacred mission to fulfill,  
 And teach to fallen man his Master's will.  
 The syren pleasure, with her 'witching smiles,  
 Here baffled finds her artifice and wiles.  
 Not discord, spreading misery and woe,  
 Not restless envy (man's most cruel foe)  
 Nor wealth's temptations can his mind controul,  
 Or shake the steadfast purpose of his soul ; 120  
 But piety, and faith, whose eagle eye  
 Can distant heav'n, and all its joys descry,  
 Teach him on wings of confidence to rise,  
 And fortune's gifts, and fortune's frowns despise,  
 Teach him to set his heart on things above,  
 And bid him seek the realms of endless love.

Secure like him who while the tempest roars,  
 And drives the shatter'd vessel to the shores,



From some high cliff beholds the awful strife,  
 And praises God, the guardian of *his* life ; 130  
 So feels the man in his retirement blest,  
 Whom no wild tumults of the world infest ;  
 Whom ev'ry peaceful day still finds the same,  
 As safe from danger as he's free from blame ;  
 Who thus secure from harm devotes his mind,  
 To please his God, and benefit mankind.  
 Such was the life which pious Gilpin led,  
 And Hooker, 'midst the venerable dead  
 Of high renown ; and Herbert, honor'd name,  
 Himself well skill'd the sacred verse to frame ; 140  
 To thee, whose matchless skill demands applause,  
 Expounder sage of nature and her laws !  
 To thee, O Hales ! that praise I gladly give  
 Thy modest spirit sought not to receive ;  
 Thee, let me follow, not to where the great  
 Rear their vast palaces in splendid state ;  
 Where the eye wonders at the wild expence,  
 And the heart sickens at magnificence :  
 But into rural scenes, thy lov'd domain,  
 And to the cot of poverty and pain, 150  
 Let me, O holy man ! thy footsteps trace,  
 And see thy goodness dignify the place ;

There the poor mother waits to ask relief,  
 With all th' expressive energy of grief,  
 And finds thy skill, by Heaven bless'd, can save  
 Her much lov'd husband from the yawning grave.  
 Nor to the mortal frame alone confin'd,  
 Thy skill can also reach and heal the mind ;  
 From thee the children of affliction learn  
 True comfort, and their safest hope discern ; 160  
 By thee consol'd the wretched cease to groan,  
 And place their confidence in God alone.  
 Or, when for thee, the sacred service calls,  
 Let us attend in yonder hallow'd walls ;  
 The muse will follow, and with joy elate,  
 Thy progress through the duty will relate,  
 Or try to sketch those leading points at least,  
 Which mark the varied labours of the Priest.

PARENT of all things ! from whose word began  
 The Heav'ns, and Earth, with all the race of man ; 170  
 Thou from the first creation didst command  
 That every seventh day should sacred stand  
 To Thee devoted—joyful to obey,  
 And give due honour to the welcome day,  
 Behold the country folks with serious care,  
 In their best habits clad, to church repair.

There, in the midst, with mild and placid mien,  
 The much-lov'd venerable Priest is seen ;  
 The band, the beaver, and the flowing gown  
 Distinguish him, and as he walks, each clown 180  
 And rustic maiden, pay, with rev'rence low,  
 The modest curtesy, or unpolish'd bow.  
 The porch he enters, with a murm'ring sound,  
 Th' attentive congregation rises round ;  
 E'en the rough 'squire, accusom'd to despise  
 His humble neighbours, yet, behold him rise  
 His pious minister's approach to greet,  
 Nor till he passes re-assumes his seat ;  
 The shrill-ton'd bell for worship bids prepare,  
 Admonishing the ear and mind to pray'r ; 190  
 The surplice round him hangs with decent grace,  
 And to the desk he walks with solemn pace.  
 Now, lifting up to Heav'n his eyes and hands,  
 In silent eloquence awhile he stands ;  
 His voice almost inspir'd attention wins,  
 When he the sacred Liturgy begins.

Whoe'er thou art within these hallow'd walls,  
 Reflect that God Himself upon thee calls ;  
 Be serious now, shake off each earthly care,  
 An off'ring worthy of thy God prepare ; 200



Each vice abandon, every sin confess,  
 Low on thy knees repentant shame express;  
 So shalt thou soon throw off the galling load,  
 And taste the boundless mercy of thy God.

Hark ! the glad sound of peace salutes thine ear,  
 And bids the guilty sinner cease to fear.

O come all ye whose grateful hearts can feel,  
 O come with souls inflam'd by holy zeal ;  
 Your God with filial confidence address,  
 And in your Saviour's words your pray'r express. 210

“ God of the Universe ! Who yet dost deign,  
 “ To be the Friend, and Father of mankind,  
 “ On Thee we call—Thy glorious kingdom rise  
 “ Triumphant o'er its foes—And let thy will  
 “ On earth controul us, as in Heav'n it rules  
 “ The blessed angels which surround thy throne.  
 “ Of food and raiment to our wants supply  
 “ A mod'rate portion, not to pamper pride,  
 “ Or nourish folly, but to give the means  
 “ Of ease and comfort. Pardon, righteous Judge, 220  
 “ Our many sins ; thy mercy only flows

" To them whose hearts are merciful, do Thou  
 " Forgive our trespasses as we forgive  
 " All who to us have ever giv'n offence.  
 " Pity our weakness ; guard us from the pow'r  
 " Of all temptations ; and from wicked men,  
 " And evil spirits, keep thy servants safe.  
 " Hear us O Lord ! these blessings at thy hand  
 " We humbly beg, because to Thee belong  
 " Eternal Glory, Majesty, and Pow'r." 130

Low on their bended knees, with serious care,  
 With heart and voice they all repeat this pray'r ;  
 Again they rise, sudden the chearful sound  
 Of praise is heard from ev'ry tongue around ;  
 The lofty roof, and gothic arches ring  
 " Glory to thee, O God, eternal King !"

The royal Bard now bids them to rejoice,  
 And raise in sacred hymns each willing voice ;  
 Him in far loftier flight the Spirit bore  
 Than Pindar's genius could attempt to soar ; 240  
 'Twas he first mingled with the heav'nly choir,  
 And swept with ecstasy the living lyre ;  
 He first from angels heard celestial songs,  
 And caught the heav'nly accents of their tongues ;

He first bade music and devotion join,  
 And to the harp attun'd his Psalms divine.  
 See at his sacred song all nature rise  
 To praise Thee ! mighty Ruler of the skies,  
 See taught by him on Thee thy creatures call,  
 Creator and Preserver of them all ! 250

Come then, and let the spirit and the fire  
 Of holy David, all your hearts inspire ;  
 To God your thanks an humble off'ring bring,  
 And to his praise in verse alternate sing.

“ Thy voice, my soul, to Heaven raise,  
 “ And sing the great Jehovah's praise ;  
 “ O Lord, my God, 'tis Thou art great,  
 “ Who, crown'd with majesty and might,  
 “ And cloathed with transcendant light,  
 “ Dwell'st far above the clouds in awful state. 260

“ He spreadeth out the Heav'ns on high,  
 “ To form his glorious canopy ;  
 “ His chariot is the raging storm ;  
 “ His ministers as flaming fire,  
 “ And swift as winds which never tire,  
 “ His angels fly his orders to perform.



“ Earth on its basis firm and sure  
 “ He fixt, for ever to endure ;  
 “ He spread the waters dark and deep ;  
 “ But soon at his rebuke they fled, 270  
 “ His thunders struck the waves with dread,  
 “ And taught them their set boundaries to keep.

“ At his command the rivers flow,  
 “ Dispensing fruitfulness they go  
 “ Their winding course, to glad the vales ;  
 “ The beasts the proffer’d blessing take,  
 “ While from each field, each tree and brake,  
 “ His praise ascends upon the balmy gales.

“ The grateful hills receive the rains,  
 “ See plenty crown the laughing plains, 280  
 “ And verdant herbage deck the fields !  
 “ See earth its bread abundant bear,  
 “ And wine the sadden’d heart to cheer,  
 “ While the green olive all its produce yields !

“ The cedars, which so stately grow  
 “ In Lebanon, fresh beauty shew,  
 “ When with the kindly moisture fill’d ;

“ These did the Sov’reign Father place,  
 “ A shelter for the feather’d race,  
 “ And for the stork her lofty nest to build. 290

“ The rocks and barren mountains ring  
 “ With praise to Thee, our God and King,  
 “ Who hast not made these wilds in vain;  
 “ Rarely approach’d by mortal feet,  
 “ The goats enjoy their safe retreat,  
 “ And tim’rous animals secure remain.

“ He bade the moon at day’s decline,  
 “ With milder influence to shine;  
 “ Th’ obedient sun his duty knows;  
 “ At night the forest tyrants stray, 300  
 “ The lordly lion roars for prey;  
 “ And round his wild domain terrific goes.

“ But when again the joyful sun  
 “ Begins his bright career to run,  
 “ They to their dens in silence creep;  
 “ Man to his labour goeth forth,  
 “ And patient tills the fruitful earth,  
 “ Till night again invites to rest and sleep.



‘ These are thy works, O gracious Lord,  
 “ Thus with thy creatures earth is stor’d ;      310  
 “ In wisdom Thou hast made them all :  
 “ Though great and wide the ocean seems,  
 “ Yet through the whole with life it teems,  
 “ With beings huge in size, and reptiles small.

“ There ships before the breezes sail,  
 “ There sports at ease th’ enormous whale ;  
 “ All creatures wait on Thee for food ;  
 “ Enough for their support and more  
 “ Thou givest from thy boundless store,  
 “ And they are satisfied with every good.      320

“ Shouldst Thou thy face in anger hide,  
 “ Thy wrath they never can abide,  
 “ To dust they turn by death subdued ;  
 “ But when thy all-creative word  
 “ Is by the lifeless matter heard,  
 “ Again they rise and nature is renew’d.

“ Thy glory, Lord, will ever stand,  
 “ The works of thy Almighty hand  
 “ Acknowledge, and rejoice in Thee ;



“ But when on earth Thou lookest down, 330  
 “ All nature trembles at thy frown  
 “ And from thy presence lofty mountains flee.

“ Ere death my earthly course shall end,  
 “ To Thee shall all my pray’rs ascend,  
 “ To whom all might and pow’r belong ;  
 “ And while I praise our gracious Lord,  
 “ All nature shall with me accord,  
 “ And He approving deign to hear the song.

“ How awful is the sinner’s fate !  
 “ Death and destruction for him wait, 340  
 “ Because on earth he puts his trust ;  
 “ But thou, my soul, with fervor raise  
 “ Thy voice to sing Jehovah’s praise,  
 “ Jehovah good, and merciful, and just.”

This done, the lessons our attention draw,  
 Who but must shrink with reverential awe  
 When the good Priest the solemn silence breaks,  
 And thus his Heav’nly Master’s mandate speaks!

“ Hear, O ye heavens, and O earth give ear,  
 “ The Lord hath spoken, with attention hear.” 350

With these dread words the holy seer began  
 His awful message sent to sinful man.  
 Celestial fire inspir'd the prophet's soul,  
 When the bright seraph plac'd the living coal  
 Snatch'd from the altar, on his lips—thence fraught  
 With God's own Spirit ; to the world he taught  
 Things yet to come, conceal'd from mortal sight,  
 In heav'n conceal'd midst unapproach'd light.

So felt Isaiah ; who shall now inspire,  
 What seraph now shall touch with heav'nly fire 360  
 The lips that read the prophet's sacred strain ?  
 Who make them pure and free from ev'ry stain ?

Inspir'd by thee, by thee O Prophet led,  
 O'er stars, and lessening suns, I seem to tread ;  
 And on imagination's wings sublime  
 To soar beyond the bounds of space and time ;  
 Earth disappears, I mount to brighter skies,  
 And heav'nly glories strike my dazzled eyes.

What ! and shall thy majestic periods flow  
 Unlike themselves in accents weak and low ? 370



O let thy spirit, Prophet, and thy fire  
 With kindred zeal the reader's voice inspire,  
 That he may give thy song that force divine,  
 That energy and strength which once were thine,  
 When to the list'ning Jews, a stubborn crowd,  
 Thou sung'st the fate of Babylon the proud ;  
 They heard astonish'd, that the morning star  
 Above the clouds of heav'n exalted far,  
 Great Lucifer, the pride of earth, should fail,  
 And hell exulting his approach should hail ;      380  
 Or when, transported at the heav'nly view,  
 They first from thee, Messiah's kingdom knew,  
 Through faith beheld the golden age increase,  
 And hail'd the future triumphs of the Prince of Peace.

O good instructor, be it then thy care  
 To give that force thy solemn words will bear ;  
 Let not thy voice creep drawling on the ground,  
 Nor roll like thunder with bombastic sound,  
 But with firm tone, with accent strong and clear,  
 Give all the mind and spirit of the seer ;      390  
 His glowing energy will then controul  
 Each stubborn heart, and pierce the inmost soul ;



Repenting man will turn and seek his Lord,  
And eloquence receive its best reward.

'Tis thus the Priest may shew a lib'ral mind,  
Form'd to admonish, and delight mankind ;  
Not like the actor on a public stage,  
Who mouths out trifles with a pompous rage,  
In gesture violent, in speaking loud,  
To catch the plaudits of a tasteless crowd ;        400  
He, as if God was in his ev'ry thought,  
As if his heart believ'd the truths he taught,  
With modest action, and with serious face,  
Will give to heav'nly wisdom decent grace ;  
O matchless eloquence ! for thus 'tis thine,  
To give new energy to things divine.

While thus he reads, mute silence reigns around,  
And all his audience catch the pleasing sound ;  
Now with the Priest their voice the people raise,  
And thus together speak their Maker's praise.        410

“ O God, we praise Thee, Thee we joyful own  
“ Of Earth and Heav'n the universal Lord ;  
“ Gladly the sons of men acknowledge Thee,

“ Eternal Father—The angelic choirs,  
 “ The heav’ns, and all their great inhabitants  
 “ Cherubic legions, and the flaming bands  
 “ Of Seraphim, to thee unceasing cry,  
 “ ‘ Most Holy Lord of Hosts, thy glory shines  
 “ ‘ Resplendent in the vast creation, Heav’n  
 “ ‘ And Earth are full of Majesty Divine.’ 420  
 “ The apostolic company, the band  
 “ Of holy prophets, and the saints who shed  
 “ Their blood in thy great cause, alike proclaim  
 “ Thy praise—The Christian church throughout the  
     world  
 “ Dispers’d, doth Thee acknowledge, glorious Lord,  
 “ Father of all, of Majesty immense ;  
 “ Thine honourable, true, and only Son ;  
 “ Also the comforter, the Holy Ghost.

“ O Christ, the everlasting Son of Him,  
 “ Who from eternal ages reigns supreme, 430  
 “ Thou art the King of Glory, yet did’st not  
 “ To be the Saviour of mankind disdain ;  
 “ Goodness amazing ! From the Heav’ns on high  
 “ Didst Thou descend, to be ’midst pain and grief  
 “ Made flesh, and of a virgin-mother born ;

“ And when thy glorious triumph was obtain’d,  
 “ When death, grim spectre, of his sting disarm’d  
 “ Own’d Thee his victor, Thou did’st open wide  
 “ To all thy followers the gates of Heav’n,  
 “ The blessed portals of eternal joy ; 440  
 “ At God’s right hand on high Thou sittest now,  
 “ Sharing paternal glory, pow’r, and bliss.

“ At time’s dread close we know that Thou shalt come  
 “ The actions of the human race to judge;  
 “ We therefore now implore thy gracious help  
 “ To save thy servants, whom thy precious death  
 “ Redeem’d from bondage, and eternal woe ;  
 “ And make them as thy blessed saints, who reign  
 “ Above with everlasting glory crown’d.

“ O Lord ! salvation to thy people send, 450  
 “ And bless the heritage which Thou hast deign’d  
 “ To call thine own ; protect them from all harm,  
 “ Govern, direct, and raise them to Thyself.

“ Thus each revolving day on Thee we call,  
 “ And magnify thy name till time shall cease.



“ O Lord, vouchsafe this day our steps to keep  
 “ Safe from the path of sin—Have mercy, Lord,  
 “ On all who stray ; but chiefly on ourselves,  
 “ O let it lighten, for on Thee we trust.  
 “ On Thee, O Lord, our firmest hopes we place, 460  
 “ Do Thou preserve us ever from despair.”

Again they sit, and see the Priest unfold  
 The sacred book in which by Christ are told  
 Religion's truths, in which to mortal ears  
 Our God Himself his sovereign will declares.  
 Yet not as when from Sinai's lofty head  
 His thunders struck the Israelites with dread ;  
 When from the cloud which hung with gloom profound  
 His lightnings flash'd, and dreadful gleam'd around ;  
 When trumpets sounded from the holy place, 470  
 And shook the steadfast mountain to its base ;  
 When God himself, as round him terrors flam'd,  
 To trembling man his holy law proclaim'd ;  
 But as when speaking with an human voice,  
 Our heav'nly Teacher bade mankind rejoice ;  
 At whose approach all doubt and terror cease,  
 And fainting mortals taste of joy and peace.

As from the clouds distill'd, the genial rain  
 Sheds fruitful influence o'er the thirsty plain,  
 Or, as with silent lapse nocturnal dew's 480  
 O'er earth their vegetative pow'r diffuse,  
 So do these gracious words which bless our ears,  
 Where Christ in mildest dignity appears,  
 Sink to the heart, the inmost soul attain,  
 And all our feelings and affections gain.

Who e'er thou art to whom the charge is giv'n,  
 Thus to make known the blessings sent from Heav'n,  
 Though once my Muse has ventur'd to advise,  
 Let me again entreat thee to be wise ;  
 Respect thyself, and Him who deigns to speak 490  
 His will by thee—What feelings must awake  
 Within that bosom, whose attention dwells  
 On Heav'nly love, and with devotion swells !  
 How must that heart with purest rapture glow,  
 Which thus is taught the Deity to know !  
 And shall the tongue, th' explainer of the mind,  
 From every law and rule be unconfinn'd ?  
 Now be it rais'd with vigour, now restrain'd,  
 That so its object may be best attain'd  
 To give, impressive to the list'ning ear, 500  
 The subject dignified, the meaning clear.

Why should the Reader these high themes debase,  
And rob them of their energy and grace?

The lessons read, behold, another care  
Must now your voices and attention share ;  
The Psalmist bids you join his sacred lays,  
And loud repeat the song of joy and praise.

“ In God your Lord be joyful, all ye lands,  
“ Each blessing comes from his all bounteous hands ;  
“ His holy will, his righteous laws obey,                      510  
“ Your soul’s best thanks and grateful service pay ;  
“ To his great name, O let the sacred song  
“ From every heart arise, and every tongue.”

Turn’d to the Altar, in a lower’d tone  
They now confess the Holy Three in One ;  
Of their belief a full profession make  
In those high truths we from the scriptures take ;  
Truths which philosophy could never shew,  
Nor human reason uninstructed know.

Who e’er you are, who from your Saviour’s name    520  
The sacred title of a Christian claim,



The Church's well-establish'd Faith profess,  
 To these high doctrines your assent express,  
 Which tho' mysterious to your finite mind  
 Are worthy the Creator of mankind :  
 The Heav'nly Host desirous to behold  
 These wonders and these mysteries unfold,  
 Confess their ignorance, and humbled own  
 All wisdom seated in their God alone ;  
 And worship fill'd with awe the heav'nly light,      530  
 Too glorious to be seen by mortal sight.

O Faith ! who should'st direct the human soul,  
 Govern our minds and all our thoughts controul ;  
 Offspring of Heav'n, descended from above,  
 Source of all happiness and holy love ;  
 Wiser than reason, who with power divine  
 Can'st distant things in closest union join ;  
 And things unseen before our sight can'st lay,  
 Thou certain guide through life's uncertain way ;  
 'Twas thou who first to Abram's wond'ring eyes      540  
 Bad'st all the beauties of his Canaan rise ;  
 He learnt from thee, though exil'd, to rely  
 On God, and fix his certain hopes on high.  
 Do thou, O Faith ! our erring footsteps guide  
 Safe through life's path and dangers yet untried,

Remove all doubt, dispel the shades of night,  
 And cheer our souls with thy celestial light,  
 Till at the last by thee supremely blest,  
 We gain the Mansions of Eternal rest.

And now on bended knees with pious air, 550  
 Address the sacrifice of praise and pray'r  
 To that great God who knows our inmost wants,  
 Who hears with patience, and with mercy grants.

And when the pray'rs are thus in order done,  
 We hear the clerk proclaim in shriller tone  
 The Psalm—at first the voices gently rise,  
 Then stronger grow as if to reach the skies.  
 Be not too nice, although the uncouth strain  
 May to fastidious ears seem dull and plain,  
 These rustic singers raise their voices here 560  
 To praise their God, and not to please the ear.  
 The Lord himself approves their humble song,  
 Who knows the heart if it direct the tongue.

Once more your eyes and your attention raise  
 To him who now his Master's will conveys  
 In mild instruction ; either he will tell  
 The awful state of man when Adam fell,

Or point to Him who chang'd the dreadful doom,  
 And from the night of death dispell'd the gloom ;  
 Or shew the Deity by Christ appeas'd, 570  
 And man from sin and all its curse releas'd,  
 Man, rescued from the jaws of death and hell,  
 And rais'd to Heav'n where Saints in glory dwell.  
 Or else he marks the crimes of civil life,  
 Condemns injustice, and forbids all strife,  
 Instructs his simple hearers what to shun,  
 Nor do to others what they wish not done  
 Unto themselves.—Thus with persuasive arts  
 He mends their manners and reforms their hearts.  
 Tremble, ye wicked ! at his warning voice, 580  
 Ye truly good ! be happy and rejoice ;  
 Lo ! as he speaks, to his commission true,  
 Your future fate he places full in view ;  
 By no false eloquence or reasoning vain  
 He seeks your wonder or applause to gain,  
 But in plain words which all who hear may know,  
 Holds out to man eternal bliss or woe ;  
 Either he shews the great and glorious prize,  
 The blessings destin'd for the good and wise ;  
 Or else he points to Satan's dread abode, 590  
 Where all will suffer who neglect their God.



O powerful arguments the mind to reach,  
 And far beyond what ancient sages teach.  
 Grecian and Roman writers ! all give way,  
 These truths which long in close concealment lay,  
 Unknown to former times, are now reveal'd,  
 And give to eloquence an ample field ;  
 Our eyes, our hearts, and our attention draw,  
 And o'er unruly man impress a sacred awe.

With mind awake, and soul devoutly bent,      600  
 Approach and take the Holy Sacrament ;  
 With rev'rence come, hence ev'ry idle thought,  
 And ev'ry wish with sin and folly fraught.

Lo, the good Priest the solemn rite begins,  
 Which e'en from Heav'nly Hosts deep rev'rence wins ;  
 As when the Jews' High Priest approach'd each year  
 The Holiest of Holies—sacred fear  
 The hearts of all who stood without, o'erspread,  
 So let each mind now pause with rev'rent dread ;  
 Be ev'ry soul which shares this heav'nly feast      610  
 With holy fear and serious awe imprest.

How shall my Muse these solemn myst'ries sing ?  
 Though she could soar upon Angelic wing

Far above earth, and with Seraphic fire  
 Bright glowing raise the song or sweep the lyre,  
 Still would her efforts cold and lifeless seem,  
 And fall unequal to the glorious theme.  
 Come then, O silence ! with thy fingers press  
 These lips, nor let the Muse too bold transgress  
 Due bounds.—Before the Altar see they kneel,      620  
 And by their gesture shew how much they feel,  
 They feel that Thou, O gracious God ! art pleas'd,  
 Thy Justice satisfied, thy Wrath appeas'd.

Why runs this tremor through my inmost breast ?  
 Why sinks my heart by sacred fear oppress'd ?  
 Religion calls, and points the Heav'nly way,  
 That call, O Holy Priest ! I glad obey,  
 To thy instructions am I wholly giv'n,  
 O form my heart, and raise my Soul to Heav'n.  
 What earthly honours can with thine compare,      630  
 Appointed thus Heav'n's goodness to declare  
 To Man ? O Messenger of Heav'n ! 'tis thine  
 To raise our views to God and things divine.

How can the Muse that sacred rite explain,  
 Design'd to cleanse from sin's polluting stain

The infant, who, the Priest with fervour prays  
May dedicate to God his future days.

You, who the solemn duty undertake  
To answer here as sponsors, ne'er forsake  
Your tender charge, but with a watchful eye, 640  
A Parent's loss, a Parent's care supply.

What was I once, in innocence how blest,  
E'er life's corroding cares destroy'd my rest !  
That peaceful mind which no base passions spoil,  
That gentle heart which knows not to beguile,  
O Father, help thy Servant to attain,  
O give me infant-innocence again !

See the kind Teacher to his little train  
Of untaught boys Religion's truths explain,  
Point with his hand to fix the wand'ring eye, 650  
And every mode of explanation try.  
The fearful learners stand with awe around,  
To catch and then repeat each unknown sound,  
And while some little one its skill displays,  
The wondering Mother speaks her joy and praise.



How blest the task ! how noble is the toil !  
 To till the mind's uncultivated soil,  
 Religion's useful knowledge to impart,  
 And plant the seeds of Virtue in the heart.

Let not the preacher of his pow'rs be vain, 660  
 Whom fashion reckons in her brilliant train,  
 Whose manners elegant and taste refin'd,  
 Are all to gain th' applause of men confin'd,  
 Whose tones in sweet harmonious cadence flow  
 To draw from beauty's eye the tear of woe.  
 Instruction should methinks be rather drest  
 In that plain language which becomes it best ;  
 I love to see the Parish Priest to youth  
 Explain the principles of sacred truth,  
 In clearest terms each holy precept tell, 670  
 And teach the Golden Rules of living well :  
 Those labours best his sacred station grace  
 Which mend the conduct of the future race.

O youth ! whate'er through life thy destin'd plan,  
 When time's sure progress shall proclaim thee man,  
 Think on the vow for thee thy sponsors bear,  
 And due allegiance to thy Lord declare.

Stand, well assur'd of triumph o'er thy foes,  
 Christ's faithful Soldier till this life shall close.  
 The Church the witness of thy pious zeal, 680  
 For thee her son a grateful love will feel ;  
 Which thus her Mitred Pastor will express  
 As were of old th' Apostles wont to bless.  
 In solemn attitude with hands outspread,  
 And bending o'er the youthful Christian's head,  
 He prays aloud—" Thy servant, Lord, defend,  
 " Upon his soul thy choicest graces send,  
 " And let him daily in thy faith increase,  
 " Till Thou shalt crown him with eternal peace."

You, who the joys of social life can prize, 690  
 The real joys which bless the good and wise,  
 O shun those dangerous snares which ever prove  
 The punishment and curse of lawless love.  
 Would you be happy ? break not virtue's law,  
 But all your bliss from her pure sources draw ;  
 Those sacred Hymeneal bands be thine  
 Where love and friendship all their pow'rs combine.  
 Why blush, O Virgin ! here's no cause for shame,  
 Since honour waits thee in the sacred name  
 Of wedded Wife ; Why then this long delay ? 700  
 The Bridegroom at the Altar chides thy stay,

And the good Priest in snowy vestments stands  
 To join with solemn rites thy plighted hands.  
 That done, he thus will bless the happy pair,  
 And Heav'n consenting grant his pious pray'r.

“ May God whose first command is mutual love,  
 “ Pour on you grace and favour from above ;  
 “ May ye on earth so well together live  
 “ That He to both eternal bliss may give.”

O, happy Husband ! thus supremely blest, 710  
 Be all thy soul in grateful love exprest ;  
 Nor yet have you, O Mother, cause to mourn  
 Though oft the dangers of your state return ;  
 When safe, your past escapes with joy survey,  
 And to your God your humble offerings pay ;  
 Enter His sacred courts with fervent zeal,  
 And lowly rev'rent at His Altar kneel ;  
 So may your offspring flourish in the earth,  
 And bear to future times their parent's worth.

But now more solemn scenes attract the eye, 720  
 Think on the close of life and learn to die.  
 Shake off the world, with downcast mind attend  
 The chamber of a sick and dying friend.



Behold him there—his hopes of life are vain,  
 His doubts and terrors still augment his pain.  
 Alas, those looks, how full of wild dismay !  
 Those hands uplifted with intent to pray !  
 But who will aid his pray'rs ? Who calm his woe ?  
 Who dry those tears which agonizing flow ?  
 See the good Priest with pitying looks engage, 730  
 To sooth his terrors and his pangs assuage ;  
 With healing words, with pious fervent pray'rs,  
 His wretched soul he frees from all its cares ;  
 Points to the seats of everlasting rest,  
 Those bright abodes, where all the good are blest ;  
 Bids him forget the world he leaves behind,  
 And with religious hope supports his mind.  
 “ Have mercy, Lord,” he prays, “ vouchsafe to hear,  
 “ And let Thy light this fainting mortal cheer,  
 “ Assist his soul to wing its happy flight 740  
 “ To realms of Peace, and Joy, and cloudless Light.”

In sable drest see yon procession come,  
 Bearing his mortal body to the tomb ;  
 They now approach with slow and silent tread,  
 To pay the last sad duties to the dead ;  
 No surplic'd choir chaunt forth their tuneful woe,  
 No hireling mourners walk to form a shew,

No titles by the Herald's voice are giv'n,  
But the good Priest thus calls our minds to Heav'n.

“ Vain life! farewell! too like the short-liv'd flow'r,  
“ Which blooms, is cut, and wither'd in an hour. 751  
“ As the light shadows vanish from the sun,  
“ So soon, so quick man's earthly race is run.  
“ So from our nostrils flies the vital breath,  
“ E'en in the midst of life we are in death.

“ To whom, O Lord! shall we for succour fly  
“ But unto Thee, who hear'st the sinner's cry;  
“ Thou giv'st to man a life beyond the grave,  
“ O from eternal death our spirits save!

“ On God's firm promises our hopes we found 760  
“ While we commit this body to the ground;  
“ Earth to that earth from whence it rose before,  
“ Ashes to ashes, dust to dust restore.”

Thrice in the grave the Sexton throws the ground,  
And thrice the coffin sends a solemn sound;  
Through all restraint the bursting sorrows break,  
And the big tears roll down each mourner's cheek.

If at this sight e'en stranger bosoms melt,  
How are such scenes by near relations felt?

The time will come too, venerable man, 770  
To put the close to thy extended span ;  
Thy labours will conclude, for death attends  
In peace to lay thee midst thy buried friends.

As when o'erloaded with the golden grain,  
The harvest falls inclin'd upon the plain ;  
As when first loosen'd by the winter's cold,  
The mellow'd fruit parts gently from its hold ;  
So has old age approach'd with chilling breath,  
Slow to prepare him for the stroke of death ;  
And creeping on by just degrees, at length 780  
Has robb'd his frame of all its former strength ;  
Yet firm in mind and with untroubled soul,  
He walks serene to life's extremest goal.  
E'en in the last sad moments of his toil,  
When struggling nature cannot but recoil,  
Still full of hope, in conscious virtue great,  
He smiling welcomes Death and meets his fate.  
No apprehensive dread invades his breast,  
No sad complaints, no groans disturb his rest ;



But all is peaceful, happy, and serene, 790  
 Till time with gentle hand concludes the scene ;  
 Just so the Sun with mild declining ray  
 Sinks in the West and ends a Summer day.

Happy, thrice happy he who shall have gain'd  
 This the most useful knowledge, and attain'd  
 The way to quit secure his earthly home,  
 When call'd to enter on the world to come :  
 For then, whenever Time concludes his days,  
 Which have not pass'd devoid of well-earn'd praise,  
 No fears of Death, which all mankind enslave, 800  
 No dread has he of sinking to the grave.  
 Such is the great reward of living well,  
 The blessed triumph over death and hell.

As the great leader of the Jewish race,  
 Though Death he knew attended in the place,  
 Fearless on Nebo's fatal summit stood,  
 And Canaan's rich and fertile country view'd,  
 With joy the promis'd land of rest survey'd,  
 And trusted in the God he had obeyed ;

So thou, O holy man ! beneath Death's hand, 810  
 On Life's extremest verge can'st boldly stand,  
 And, trusting in thy Saviour's merits, view  
 Those bright rewards to active virtue due.

*FINIS.*

## NOTES.

*Line 137.*—Bernard Gilpin, Rector of Houghton-le-Spring, in Durham; whose piety, learning, moderation and benevolence, gained him the title of the Northern Apostle. He resolutely refused all honours and preferment above his Rectory, and died a Parish Priest.

*Line 138.*—Richard Hooker, Rector of Bishopsbourne. Author of Ecclesiastical Polity.

*Line 139.*—George Herbert, Rector of Bemerton. He wrote a Poem, entitled the Country Parish Priest; and illustrated by his example the character which his pen had delineated.

*Line 143.*—Stephen Hales, Minister of Teddington, in Middlesex. A man not only remarkable for the conscientious discharge of his pastoral duties, but also for his skill in medicine.

The lives of these great and good men are given at some length in the new Encyclopedia, and in most Biographical Works; they will amply reward the trouble of perusing them.



## NOTES

The first of these is a paper by Dr. J. H. Thompson, of the University of California, which is a study of the history of the word "fossil" and its application to the various classes of remains. It is a very interesting paper, and one which should be read by all who are interested in the history of the word.

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